



## Child Safeguarding Statement

### 1. Name of service being provided:

Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland (HDAI) is a national voluntary organisation providing information and support to individuals and families impacted by Huntington's disease.

Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland is managed by a Board of Directors who have approved the Child Safeguarding Statement. HDAI employ one full-time and one part-time staff member who have been appropriately vetted and Garda Vetted. Any HDAI volunteers who may have access to children in the course of their work with HDAI will be Garda Vetted and informed of HDAI's Child Protection policy prior to commencing their duties.

### 2. Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland's services include: a family support officer to meet / offer telephone support to families in crisis, a national helpline, access to counselling, HD seminars and Information talks, an annual conference and respite weekend, carer workshops, support meetings, quarterly newsletters, an annual magazine, assistance in the provision of aids and appliances and other support as required.

HDAI provides information and support to individuals and families impacted by Huntington's disease. HDAI's service mostly works with adults however; in the course of our work, HDAI staff also come into contact with children and young adults from families impacted by Huntington's disease. Huntington's disease symptoms may include physical, cognitive and emotional changes. Children of a parent with HD may require emotional support from HDAI's Family Support Officer. HDAI also refers young people from HD families to accredited counsellors when required.

Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people with whom we come in contact as part of our service. It is our responsibility to ensure they are safeguarded from harm. HDAI staff are appropriately vetted by HDAI and are Garda Vetted and made aware of HDAI's code of practice to protect children. Furthermore, all staff complete the necessary training in relation to Child Safeguarding. HDAI's Child Protection Policy Document provides information and best practice in relation to the following:

- Categories and definitions of Child Abuse
- Recognising abuse
- Dealing with a disclosure
- Reporting abuse

- Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse
- Code of practice

### 3. Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

|   | <b>Risk identified</b>   | <b>Procedure in place to manage identified risk</b>   |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | Risk of harm to a young person being left alone with a HDAI staff member   | Staff are vetted and are fully aware of HDAI's Safeguarding Statement   |
| 2 | Risk of harm to a young person attending counselling funded by HDAI  | Accredited counsellors are Garda Vetted and aware of HDAI's Safeguarding Statement. A Counsellor is a Mandated Person as defined by The Children First Act 2015 |
| 3 | Risk of harm to young persons at events hosted by HDAI e.g., Annual conference, Christmas lunch, fundraising events. | Parents/Guardians present at all times at HDAI events. Parents are encouraged to read HDAI's Safeguarding Statement.  |

The Board and Staff of Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland, in undertaking this Risk Assessment, have endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that are relevant to HDAI and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage all risks identified. While it is not possible to foresee and remove all risks of harm, HDAI has in place the procedures listed in this Risk Assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

The staff and Board of Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland have completed this Risk Assessment on 30/01/2018. Latest review 19/12/22

### 4. Procedures

Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland's Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)*, and TUSLA's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of HDAl's service;
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of HDAl staff and volunteers to work with children;
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm;
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla;
- Elizabeth O'Sullivan, Family Support Officer is HDAl's Designated Liaison Person under the Children First Act 2015
- Patricia Towey, Information and Services Coordinator is HDAl's Deputy Liaison Person.

All procedures listed are available upon request.

## **5. Implementation**

Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland recognise that implementation is an on-going process and is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children we come in contact with safe from harm.

The Board of HDAl will review this Child Safeguarding Statement on an annual basis, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed: Thomas Lillis, Chairperson

Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland

For queries, please contact:

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